(c) There is no proposal to set up any new SEZ by the Central Government. However, some of the existing Export Processing Zones are proposed to be converted into SEZs. SEZs may be set up in the public, private, joint sector or by the State Governments. The Zones will become operational from the date notified by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

New Export-Import Policy

3076. SHRI GAYA SINGH :

SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a new Export-Import Policy for 2000-2001 has been announced by Government;

(b) if so, the sailent features thereof;

(c) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the criticism from various quarters that the new policy will badly hit the small scale industries, agriculturists and pave the way for more dependence on foreign capital and adversely affect the balance of payment position; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b) In the revised EXIM Policy (RE-2000), 1997-2002 notified on 31-3-2000, Government has announced various measures to promote exports. These include setting up Special Economic Zones, rationalisation of existing export promotion schemes (EPCG and Duty Exemption/Remission Scheme), encouragement to export of quality/branded goods, procedural simplifications, de-centralisation in decision making and reduction of interface between exporters and Government organisations through the facility of electronic filing of applications at several port offices.

(c) and (d) There has been some criticism of the Policy primarily on account of withdrawal of quantitative restrictions. However, Government feels that the doubts and apprehensions against the decision to withdraw Quantitative Restrictions (QRs) in respect of certain items, are exaggerated and not well founded. The Customs duties on most of the items for which QRs have been removed, have already been raised to the peak level of 35%. Moreover, in the event of any unfair trade practice adopted by exporters from other countries or

sudden surge in imports causing injury to the domestic industry, sufficient provisions are available in the form of anti-dumping/safeguard measures to protect the domestic industry.

Special Economic Zone to be set-up in Tamil Nadu and Gujarat

†3077. DR. D. MASTHAN :

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have so far selected Tamil Nadu and Gujarat to set up a Special Economic Zone in first phase;

(b) if so, the reasons for selecting only these States in the first phase; and

(c) what is the total number of Special Economic Zones decided to be set up in the country alongwith the number of phases and time limit to complete them?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (c) Government have approved setting up of EPZ/SEZ in the joint sector at Nanguneri in Tamil Nadu and Positra in Gujarat on the basis of proposal received from Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation Limited and Gujarat Positra Port Infrastructure Limited, respectively. There is no proposal to set up any new SEZ by the Central Government. However, SEZs may be set up in the public, private, joint sector or by the State Governments. Some of the existing Export Processing Zones are also proposed to be converted into SEZs.

Relaxation of Import Licencing Restriction

3078. SHRI AMAR SINGH :
SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that it has opened flood gate by

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.